

Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SCCT-01 SAB-01 SAM-01

EB-07 OMB-01 DLOS-04 SAL-01 /120 W

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R 011440Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1850

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 1433

E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG, PFOR, TS

SUBJ: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: DEPT'S ORGANIZATION, ACTIVITIES
AND OBJECTIVES; REQUEST FOR MULTILATERAL INFORMATION
ON HOST GOVERNMENTS

REF : STATE 37591

1. REFTEL, PARA 7 (A): FOREMOST MULTILATERAL OBJECTIVE OF
GOT THIS YEAR MAY BE FURTHER BOOSTING INTERNATIONAL LEG-
ITIMACY OF PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION. THIS, AND
MOST OTHER ISSUES ON WHICH ARAB LEAGUE AS A WHOLE IS UNITED,
WILL RECEIVE SOLID TUNISIAN SUPPORT. GOT TRADITION OF SUPPORT
FOR DECOLONIALIZATION WILL DICTATE AN OUTSPOEKN STAND
ON SOUTH AFRICA, AND TEND TO MAKE GOT UNWILLING TO SPEAK
OUT IN SEPARATING TRULY "COLONIALIST" SITUATIONS FROM
OTHERS SUCH AS GUAM, PUERTO RICO. TUNISIA'S MEMBERSHIP ON
THE COMMITTEE OF 24, WHICH DRAFTS UN DECOLONIALIZATION
RESOLUTIONS, TENDS TO PRECOMMIT GOT'S VOTE IN OTHER
COMMITTEES OR PLENARY WHEN THESE RESOLUTIONS ARE OFFERED.
(EMBASSY HAS NO INFORMATION ON THE WORKINGS OF COMMITTEE
OF 24 OR HOW GOT STAFFS OR FOLLOWS THE COMMITTEE'S MEETINGS.)
GOT WILL LEND A DEGREE OF LIP SERVICE TO PROPOSALS ON
BEHALF OF MOST "POPULAR LIBERATION" MOVEMENTS. ON ECONOMIC
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SIDE, GOT PRIMARY INTERESTS ARE IN USING MULTILATERAL FORA

TO IMPROVE TERMS OF TRADE IN FAVOR OF LDC'S, PARTICULARLY RAW MATERIAL PRODUCERS, AND TO ASSURE MAXIMUM ACCESS TO IMF/IBRD RESOURCES ON FAVORABLE TERMS. WE SEE NO SIGNIFICANT LEVERAGE AVAILABLE THROUGH OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD TUNISIAN CANDIDATES FOR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION POSITIONS.

2. REFTEL, PARA 7 (B): TUNISIA IS SENSITIVE TO ALGERIAN CONCERNS IN INTERNATIONAL CIRCLES, THOUGH AS WESTERN SAHARA AND ANGOLA CASES SHOW, GOT DOES NOT ALWAYS GO ALONG WITH GOA. GOT'S CREDENTIALS AS A GENUINE THIRD WORLD NATION ARE, HOWEVER, IMPORTANT TO HER, AND GOT WILL TRY TO AVOID DRAWING WRATH OF "PROGRESSIVE" STATES UPON HER. GOT LIKEWISE IS MOST SENSITIVE TO MAINTAINING AN ACCEPTABLE POSITION IN THE ARAB LEAGUE CONTEXT. WHILE LENDING SUPPORT TO RELATIVELY MODERATE PALESTINIAN POSITIONS, SHE WILL ATTEMPT TO IDENTIFY WITH THE MORE CONSERVATIVE (EGYPTIAN, MOROCCAN, SAUDI) ARAB STATES' EFFORTS TOWARD A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT, WITHOUT, HOWEVER, TAKING A LEAD WHICH COULD ANGER HARDLINERS (LIBYA, PERHAPS SYRIA). GOT SEEKS MAXIMUM BENEFITS FROM ASSOCIATION WITH EC AND FROM EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE BUT LIMITS EC INFLUENCE OVER ITS MULTILATERAL POSITIONS. TUNISIA'S RELATIVELY SOPHISTICATED AND MODERATE REPRESENTATIVES SEEK TO PLAY IMPORTANT ROLE IN MULTILATERAL DELIBERATIONS, PARTICULARLY ON ECONOMIC SUBJECTS, AND MAINTAIN A FAIRLY CONSISTENT PATTERN OF ADVOCATING DIALOGUE IN LIEU OF CONFRONTATION IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. THIS INCLUDES PRIMARILY THE ARAB LEAGUE, OAU, UNGA, AND GROUP OF 77.

3. REFTEL, PARA 7 (C): WE HAVE LESS THAN COMPLETE INFORMATION ON THIS POINT. WE BELIEVE THAT DEGREE OF GOT CONTROL OVER DELEGATIONS DEPENDS A GREAT DEAL BOTH ON DEGREE OF GOT INTEREST IN THE ISSUES AT STAKE, AND ON THE PERSONAL CONNECTIONS OR INDEPENDENT STATURE OF THE PARTICULAR GOT DELEGATION. THUS, AMB. KEDADI, AT LOS MEETINGS, PROBABLY NEITHER NEEDS NOR RECEIVES INSTRUCTIONS, BUT IN ESSENCE, DECIDES GOT POLICY HIMSELF. RACHID DRISS AT UN SEEMS TO HAVE SHOWN INDEPENDENCE AT TIMES, PROBABLY REFLECTING NOTHING MORE THAN LACK OF GUIDANCE. AT TIMES, WE THINK, MOFA HAS INSTRUCTED DRISS PURSUANT TO USG DEMARCHES, BUT HAS LISTENED

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MORE TO DRISS' EXPLANATION OF THE NEGOTIATING SITUATION IN NEW YORK THAN TO USG'S EXPLANATION OF THE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED. THE MACHINERY AT MOFA DOES NOT APPEAR CAPABLE OF INSTRUCTING ALL DELEGATIONS IN A TIMELY MANNER, THROUGH DOUBTLESS IT PREPARES GENERAL GUIDELINES WELL IN ADVANCE OF MEETINGS. WE HAVE NO IDEA OF THE VOLUME OR COMPLETENESS OF GOT DELEGATION REPORTING TO MOFA. WHEN AN ISSUE TAKES ON UNANTICIPATED WORLDWIDE SIGNIFICANCE, AND IS POLITICALLY

SENSITIVE IN TERMS OF HEADLINES, MOST GOT DELEGATIONS WOULD, WE THINK, CHECK WITH TUNIS BEFORE CASTING THEIR VOTE. THERE WILL PRESUMABLY BE MANY VOTES, HOWEVER, SEEN AS ROUTINE BY GOT BUT OF URGENCY TO USG, ON WHICH INSTRUCTIONS TO GOT DELS WILL HAVE BEEN RATHER GENERAL, AND TO WHICH DELS WILL FEEL NO NEED TO CONSULT MOFA, THEREBY PERHAPS VOTING NEEDLESSLY AGAINST A USG POSITION.

4. REFTTEL, PARA 7 (C): GOT PERMANENT REPS AND CHIEFS OF DELEGATION RARELY IF EVER, THESE DAYS, CARRY INDEPENDENT POLITICAL AUTHORITY. SENIOR MEN LIKE DRISS AT THE UN OR EXPERIENCED INTERNATIONAL "TECHNICIANS" HAVE BUREAUCRATIC AUTHORITY WHICH MAY MAKE THEM MORE DIFFICULT FOR MOFA TO INSTRUCT THAN LESSER FIGURES.

5. REFTTEL, PARA 7 (E): WHILE GOT, AT LEAST ON POLITICAL ISSUES, ACCEPTS THE FACT THAT OUR MULTILATERAL CONCERS ARE RIGHTLY PART OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS, AND MOST OFFICIALS AT ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT LISTEN POLITELY, OUR APPROACHES HAE HISTORICALLY MET WITH LESS THAN OPEN AND RESPONSIVE REPLIES. GOT'S MOFA IS DEEPLY STAFFED WITH OFFICER WITH UN AND OTHER AGENCY EXPERIENCE, AND THEIR EXPERTISE IS OCCASIONALLY GREATER THAN THAT AVAILABLE AT THE EMBASSY ON PARTICULAR ISSUES. THUS THERE IS A AN AIR OF BENIGN TOLERANCE AT MOFA FOR WHAT WE THINK THEY SEE AS NAIVE (NOT TRICKY) AMERICAN REQUESTS FOR TUNISIA'S VOTE. THIS OF COURSE LEADS US BACK TO DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS, DRAFTED AT THE LAST MINUTE, IN CRISIS, AND NOT ALWAYS CONTAINING SUFFICIENT BACKGROUND TO ENABLE US REALLY TO MAKE AN EFFECTIVE CASE AT MOFA. TUNISIANS ARE GENETICALLY EXPERT AT DISTINGUISHING RHETORIC FROM GENUINE CONCERN AND AT SORTING OUT THEIR OWN NATIONAL INTEREST ON A GIVEN ISSUE. ONLY EXAMPLE WE CAN RECALL OF GOT HAVING SOUGHT OUR SUPPORT OR ATTEMPTED TO COORDINATE AN APPROACH TO A SUBSTANTIVE MATTER IN A MULTI-CONFIDENTIAL

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LATERAL FORUM IS HOPE EXPRESSED LAST SUMMER BY MINISTER OF PLAN THAT USG WOULD SUPPORT GOT EFFORTS IN INTERIM COMMITTEE TO EXTEND "THIRD WINDOW FINANCING" TO RELATIVELY WELL-OFF LDC'S LIKE TUNISIA (75 TUNIS 3432). TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, USG NEVER RESPONDED TO THIS REQUEST.
SEELYE

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